

Lives of the Brachmans

Briefly Noted;

Or, Epistles and Discourses betwixt
Alexander the Conqueror
AND

DINDIMUS
King of the Brachmans

Giving an Account what sort of People they are, their
Divinity and Philosophy, with their manner of
Living, &c.

Collected together, and Published for a general Service.

*Pythagoras saith, God resembles Light & Truth: God himself inhabits the
lowest, highest and middlemost; there is no being or place without God.
Socrates said, God is so great, as that at once he sees all, hears all, is every
where, and orders all.*

*Philo, a Jew born, yet a very noted Philosopher, saith, How should the
Soul of a man know God, if he did not inspire her, and take hold of her by
his divine Power?*

*Who after Death, reathe the heavenly plains,
Become like God, and never dye again.*

*The Golden distick of the
Pythagorians, as it hath
been called.*

*London, Printed and Sold by Andrew Seale, at the Crook, near
Holy-Well-Door, near St. Dunstons.*

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I. *Dindimus* King of the *Brachmans*, his Letter to
Alexander the Conquerer.

KING, We have heard of thy Battles and Victories, but what shall suffice thee whom all the World sufficeth not? Riches we have none for thee; why then shouldst thou war on us? All our Goods are to common us: Vile things and scarce we have, instead of Gold and great Aray: Our Women be not arayed to please; for great Aray is counted nought with us; not highness nor fairness: Our Women desire no more Fairness than they have by kind; dry Ditches and Dens stand us in double stead, for Harbour while we live, and for Graves when we are dead. If we have sometimes a King, it is not to do us Right; for Honesty by kind will do that: We have amongst us neither Doom nor Plea, for we do nothing that needs Redress, either by Doom or Plea: We desire no more than Reason and Kind asketh; we hold that needful which we know is measurable: Our People have one Law, and do nothing against this Law of Kind: We use no Trade to make us covetous: We shun and forsake foul Sloth and Leachery. We do nothing that needs Punishment. It is unlawful to us to wound the Hills with Coulters, or the Ax: We use no glutting or outrageousness of Meats or Drink, therefore we be not sick: We dwell in the dry Ditches; Heaven finds us a Covering, the Earth a Lodging: We be not Warriors, we make peace with good living, not with strength: We seek not plentious Gain; for it is right liking to us to behold the Firmament and Stars of Heaven: We be men of single Speech, its common to us all not to Lye. The God of all Grace is our God; for he hath liking in our words and deeds, by our manner of speaking; he is a Word, a Spirit, Love and Thought, and is not pleased with worldly Riches, but with holy Works and thanks for his Grace.

Upon this King *Alexander* answer'd with Taunts and Jeers, as if *Dindimus* despised Gods Benefits, counting all Handicrafts sinful;

and also say, *That they are Gods, and so have envy to God, and blaſphemy his faireſt Creatures.*

But *Dindimus* answered, We be not at home in this world, we come not to dwell here, &c. we be not aliend with charges of Sin, but without each manner of charge, we draw near to our own Houſes, and lie ſaſt homewards; we ſay, *Not we be Gods,* but we ſay, we will not abuſe the goodneſſe of God Almighty: we ſay, things are ſeemly which are lawfull; God hath put the uſe of things into mens freedom; then he that leaveth the *worſt*, and followeth the *beſt*, is not God, but is made *Gods Friend*. When ye ſwell in Wealth, and Pride hath blown you up, ye forget that ye are *Men*, and ſay that *God reckons of Mankind*. Ye build Temples to your ſelves, in which ye ſhed mens Blood; and therefore I call you Wood (or Mad) for ye wot not what ye do; and if ye deſpiſe Gods writing, then ye hold in the Sacriledge.

Then *Alexander* writeth this Epistle to him again, with many Taunts and Jeers, comparing them in their Sacrifices to them that were in Priſon, ſaying, *The cauſe why they killed not the ground w: is becauſe they had no Iron: And their Women not coſtly arrayed, is no marvel, becauſe they have not wherewith.*

Dindimus answered, Ye make wars and Battles, and war outwardly againſt men, becauſe ye have not overcome the Enemy Within; but we *Brachmans* have overcome the inward Battels in our Members, and reſt ſecure, and have no Battles outwardly; we behold the Firmament of Heaven, her Birds ſinging; we be healed & fed with Leaves and Fruits of Trees; we drink Water, and ſing Songs in Worſhip of God, and take heed, & think of the Life coming. We be approv'd with few words, and even ſtill, and hold our peace. Ye ſay what ſhall be done, and yet do it not: Your *Wis* and *Wiſdom* is in your *Lips*; ye hunger after *Gold*, ye need *Houſes* and *Servants*, ye want *Reverence* and *Worſhip*, &c.

I I. Of the Ambaſſadours ſent by *Alexander* to *Dindimus*, with his Reply to them.

After that, *Alexander* ſent Ambaſſadors to *Dindimus*, requiring him, and charging him, *To come to him without delay; promiſing*

sing him great Gifts and Rewards if he obeyed, which if he did not he should loose his Life; and all this in the Name of Alexander, the King of all men, and Son of the great God Jupiter.

But Dindimus singling at this vapour, and not moving his head from the Leaves he lay upon, and lay still, and answered after this manner, *Soth fast, God, the great King, giveth man right, & doth no man Wrong; he never begot Injury, but Light, Life, Peace, the Water, Body and Soule, which he also receives when they have finished their course; nor was he ever the Author of Lust: This is my Lord and only God, who as he hates Murther, so he wageth not War, nor raiseth Strife. The things I seek, I easily attain to; those things which I regard not, I am not to be driven to; if therefore Alexander take my Head, and slay me, he shall not destroy my Soul, which will return to the Lord, while the Body, which was taken out of the Earth, shall thereunto return; for I being made a Spirit, shall ascend unto my God, who included us in the flesh, and placed us upon this Earth, to try us, whether we being gone forth from him, would live unto him, as he hath commanded, who demandeth an account of those that depart; for he is a Judge of all Injuries: and the Sighs of those that are injuriously treated, become the pain of those that injure them. Let Alexander then threaten them that love Silver and Gold, and fear Death; neither of which have place amongst the Brachmans, who do neither fear the one nor love the other. Go therefore & tell Alexander, Dindimus wants him not, and if he wants Dindimus, let him come to him.*

III. The Conference betwixt Alexander and Dindimus.

Which being reported to Alexander, he was the more desirous to see the single old man, that could conquer him after he had conquered so many Nations, and so left all Pomp and Boasting, comes to him, and said, *I come to hear a word of Wisdom from thee, whom I hear dost converse with God.*

To whom Dindimus replied, *Why distrustest thou our Peace; very willingly would I administer to thee, the words of the Wis-*

dom of God, hadst thou but place in thy Mind, to receive the Gift of God administred; but thy Mind being filled with various Lusts, unfixable Avarice, and devilish Desire to Rule, which fight against me and my designs of drawing thee off from destroying Nations, and shedding humane Blood, are in all things contrary to the Wisdom, by which I and the *Brachmans* are led, who worship God, love Men, condemn Gold, despise Death and slight Pleasures; whereas *Alexander* and his fear Death, love Gold, covets Pleasure, hate Men and despise God; adding, How can I speak unto thee the words of the Wisdom of God, whose Cogitations are so filled with Pomp, Ostentation and inordinate Lusts, that a whole World is not able to satiate thee? How then shall I suffice thee? And further, God hath made thee little, and thou desirest all the World; yet needest thou have as little Land at last, as thou seest me lie upon, or thy self sit upon: If thou learnest Wisdom of me, it is all thou shalt have, &c. I know God's Secrets; for God doth will that I be partaker of his works; then whether, sayst thou, is most right, to misbid men, or to defend them, and do them right? to shed and kill, or to keep and save? If thou slay me, I go to God.

However, he refused not to give *Alexander* that counsel, which as he confessed, was convinced in his heart, was good, but could not follow, viz. to cease warring against men without, and engage himself in another warfare, against the *Enemies within himself*, his Lusts, Affections and Desires, if he desired to be Rich indeed, and to be a true Victor; assuring him, that all his Power, all his Hosts, all his Riches, all his Pomp, would at last not avail him any thing; but (saith he) if thou wilt hearken unto my words, thou shalt possess of my Goods, who have God to my Friend, and whose Inspiration I enjoy within me—Thus thou shalt overcome Lust, the Mother of Penury, which never obtains what it seeks; thus thou shalt with us honour thy self, by becoming such as God had created thee. Adding, though thou slay me for telling thee these profitable things, I fear not; for (saith he) I shall return to my God, who created all things, who knows my cause, and before whom nothing is hidden. I know not, saith he, whether thou shalt be so happy as to find thy self perswaded by my words, but I assure thee, if thou be
not,

not, when thou art departed hence, I shall see thee punished for thy Actions, and hear thee lament with deep and sharp Sighs, the Misery thou hast put many to, &c. viz. when thou shalt have no other Companion than the Memory of the Evils thou hast heap-
ed upon thy self; for, saith he, I know the Pains justly inflicted by God upon unjust men. Then thou shalt say unto me, *Dindimus*, how good a Counsellor wert thou to me, &c!

These things *Alexander* heard (as its said of *Herod* concerning *John Baptist*) not only without wroth, but with a placid Countenance; and replied, O *Dindimus*! thou true Teacher of the Brachmans, thou comest of God, I have found thee the most excellent amongst men, by reason of the Spirit that is in thee: I know all thou hast spoken is true; God hath brought thee forth, and sent thee into this place, in which thou art happy and rich, wanting nothing, enjoying much rest and peace. But what shall I do, who cohabit with continual Slaughter? I live in great Dread, and am afraid of my own Warders; I dread more my Friends than my Enemies; I may not leave them and trust others. At dayes I grieve other men, and am at night grieved my self: If I would live in the Desert, my Lieutenants would not suffer me; and though they would, being in this state, it is not lawful for me to quit them; for how shall I defend my self before God, who hath assigned me this Lot. But thou Reverend old Man, and Servant of God, for these words of Wisdom, wherewith thou hast helped and rejoiced me, deborting me from War, receive thou my Presents, and despise me not; I am affected with Kindness, honouring Wisdom: And so commanded his Servants to bring forth Gold and Silver; Bread and Oyl, and several sorts of Aray; which *Dindimus* beholding, laughed, saying to *Alexander*, Perswade (if thou canst) the Birds about the Woods to receive thy Gold, or sing the better for it; but if thou canst not perswade them, nor shalt thou ever perswade me to be worse than they; I therefore receive no unprofitable Present, which I can neither eat nor drink; nor do I serve Soul-hurtful Riches, &c. Here is nothing in this Desert to be bought with Gold, for God gives me all things freely, &c. selling nothing for Gold, but freely bestowing all good things, and even the Mind on those that freely accept it, &c. but for that I will not grieve thee too much, I

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will receive the Oyl of thee; And he walking about the Wood, gathered some sticks, and kindled a Fire, he said, The *Brackmans* have all things, being fed by Providence; and into the Fire he poured the Oyl, till it was all consumed, and sang a Hymn to God Almighty, as followeth:

"O God Immortal! I give thee in all things Thanks; for thou rulest in all things, giving all things abundantly to thy Creatures for their Food. Thou creating this World, dost preserve it, expecting the Souls which thou hast sent into it, that thou mayst, as God, justify those that have led a Pious Life, and condemn those that have not obeyed thy Laws; for all Righteous Judgment is with thee, and Life Eternal prepared by thee, who with Eternal Goodness shewest Mercy unto all.

¶ Lastly, Now as concerning the *Brackmans* of India, *Suidas* tells of one *Brackman* that prescribed their Rites and Laws, &c.

Of the *Indian Philosophers*, or men learned and Religious, the *Brackmans* obtain the first place, as being nearest in sect to the *Greeks*. These are, after their manner, *Naxarites* from the Womb: So soon as their Mother is conceived of them, there are learned men appointed, which come to the Mother with Songs, containing Precepts of Chastity: As they grow in years, they change their Masters; they have their places of Exercise in a Grove, nigh to the City, where they are busied in grave Concerns: They eat no living Creatures, nor have use of Women, live frugally, and lie upon skins; they will instruct such as will hear them, but their Hearers must neither sneeze, spit nor speak. When they have in this strict course spent thirty seven years, they may live more at pleasure and liberty, in Diet, Habit, proper Habitations, and the use of Gold and Marriage; they conceal their Mysteries from their Wives, lest they should blab them abroad: They esteem this Life as *Mans* Conception, but his Death-day to be his Birth-day unto that true and happy Life, to him which hath been rightly Religious, [*A worthy Sentence!*] The *Brackmans* hold the World to be created corruptible, round, ruled by the high God. *Water* they imagin to have been the beginning of making the World; and that besides the four Elements there is a fifth Na-

ture, whereof the Heavens and Stars consist: They hold the Immortality of the Soul, and of the Torments of Hell; and that the Souls of the Righteous go to God.

Megasthenes commendeth *Mandanis* (one of the *Brachmans*) saying, That when *Alexander's* Messengers told him, That he must come to the Son of Jupiter, with Promise of Rewards if he came, but if otherwise, menacing Torture. He answered, That neither was he *Jupiter's* Son, nor did possess any great part of the Earth. As for himself, he neither respected his Gifts nor feared his Threatnings; for while he lived, *India* yielded him sufficient; if he dyed, he should be freed from Age, and exchange for a better and purer Life: whereupon *Alexander* both pardoned and praised him.

Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of their Fastings, and other austere Courses, out of *Alex. Poly. Hist. de Ritu Judicis*, "The *Brachmans* (saith he) neither eat any quick thing, nor drink Wine, but some of them eat every day, as we do; some only every third day: They contemn Death, nor much esteem of Life, believing to be Born again. *Clem. Alexi. Strom.* l. 3.

Suidas tells of a Nation called *Brachmans*, inhabiting an Island in the Sea, where *Alexander* erected a Pillar, with Inscription, That he had passed so far. They live an hundred and fifty years, and have neither Bread, Wine, Flesh, Metall nor Houses, but live of the Erniss and clear Water, and are very Religious, &c. These slay no Beasts in Sacrifice, but affirm, that God accepteth unbloody Sacrifices of Prayer, and more delighteth in Man his own Image.

To *Alexander* did the *Indian Magie* (so doth *Arianus* call their *Brachmans*) say, That he was but as other men, saying that he had less Rest, and more Troublefom, and being dead should enjoy no more Land than would serve to cover his Body; and every man (said they) stamping with their feet on the ground, hath as much as he treadeth on. *Arian. lib. 7.*

Ensebius writeth out of *Bradjanus Cyrus*, That amongst the *Indians* and *Bactrians* were many Thousand *Brachmans*, which as well by Tradition as by Law, worshipped no Image, nor

eat any quick Creature, drank no Wine nor Beer, only attending on Divine things; whereas the other *Indians* are very Vicious, yea, some hunt men, sacrifice and devour them, and were as Idolaters. *Euseb. de pres. Evang. lib. 6. cap. 8.*

Heurnius reporteth, That they have Books and Prophets, which they alledge for Confirmation of their Opinions; and that they have in their Writings the *Decalogue*, with the Explication thereof; that they adjure all of their Society to silence, touching their Mysteries; and that they adore the God which created Heaven and Earth, often repeating the Sentence, *I Adore thee, O God, with thy Grace and Aid forever.* When they wash themselves (which is often) they lay a little Ashes on their Fore-heads and Breasts, saying, *That they shall return unto Ashes.* *Heur. indic. cap. 3.*

There was a malabar Poet, which wrote nine hundred Epigrams against their Pago-gods, each consisting of eight Verses, wherein he speaks many things Elegantly of the divine Providence of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell, and other things, agreeing to the *Christian Faith*, *That God is present every where, and gives to everyone according to his estate; That Celestial Blessedness consists in the Vision of God; That the damned in Hell shall be tormented Millions of Tears in Flames, and shall never dye.*

Aristotle in his *Ethicks*, lib. 10. cap. 4. 7. said, *They that did these things did them not as men, but as having something Divine, or of God in them.*

Those that desire to read more of their Divinity, Philosophy, and manner of Living, are refer'd to a paper lately published entituled, *A Dialogue betwixt an East Indian Brachman, and a Christian*, price 1 d.

THE END,

